

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SAIGON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH IMMEDIATE

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG IMMEDIATE

CINCPAC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 036901

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OREP, VS, CB

SUBJECT: CODEL VISIT TO VIET-NAM AND CAMBODIA

REF: STATE 31771

1. ARRANGEMENTS FOR CODEL TRAVEL TO VIET-NAM AND CAMBODIA
CONTINUE TO MATERIALIZE SLOWLY, AS CODEL HAS DIFFICULTY
ESTABLISHING ITS OWN ORGANIZATION AND LEADERSHIP. AT
PRESENT WE BELIEVE FOLLOWING MEMBERS WILL PARTICIPATE:
SENATORS BIDEN, CLARK, GARN, LAXALT, BARTLETT AND
POSSIBLY JOHNSTON; REPRESENTATIVES MCCLOSKEY,
CHAPPELL, CEDERBERG, HARKIN, FENWICK, ABZUG, KEMP, FRASER,
FLYNT AND POSSIBLY ONE OR TWO OTHERS.

2. WHILE PRECISE ITINERARY STILL NOT FIXED, COMMITTEE
HAS INDICATED DESIRE TO DEPART EARLY AM FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 21
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FROM WASHINGTON, ARRIVING LATE SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22 HONG

KONG; ARRIVAL IN SAIGON AFTERNOON FEBRUARY 23; DEPART
SAIGON SATURDAY, MARCH 1 FOR HONOLULU, AND DEPART
HONOLULU MARCH 2 FOR WASHINGTON. WE DO NOT EXPECT TO KNOW
HOW MANY MEMBERS WILL WISH TO MAKE TRIP TO PHNOM PENH
UNTIL ARRIVAL SAIGON. HOWEVER, UNLESS SOME MEMBERS
PICK UP OPTION FOR OVERNIGHT IN PHNOM PENH, THOSE WHO

TRAVEL TO CAMBODIA WOULD DO SO FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28.

3. FOR SAIGON. AT FEBRUARY 18 MEETING WITH SOME OF
MEMBERS WHO WILL PARTICIPATE IN TRIP, LIST OF SUGGESTED
ACTIVITIES WAS AGREED UPON BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY HABIB.
SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR ENTIRE DELEGATION INCLUDE:
MEETING WITH PRESIDENT THIEU; MILITARY BRIEFING (STATUS
OF FRIENDLY FORCES AND THREAT ANALYSIS, LOGISTICS,
REQUIREMENTS FOR U.S. ASSISTANCE BOTH PRESENT AND FUTURE);
POLITICAL BRIEFING; ECONOMIC BRIEFING (INCLUDING STATE OF
VIETNAMESE ECONOMY AND REQUIREMENTS FOR U.S. ASSISTANCE);
CIA BRIEFING (INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL THREAT, INFILTRATION
AND SUPPLY).

4. SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS INCLUDE: MEET
WITH PRG REPS IN SAIGON; IN-COUNTRY TRAVEL TO CAN THO,
DANANG, QUANG NGAI (AFSC HOSPITAL), FATHER AI'S VILLAGE;
VISIT PRISONS AND MEET "PROMINENT PRISONERS" (NOT FURTHER
IDENTIFIED); SEE REFUGEE AREAS, MEET POLITICAL OPPOSITION,
INCLUDING "THIRD FORCE FIGURES," AND FATHER THANH; LOOK
INTO MIA-POW ISSUE; BRIEFING ON ICCS AND MEET WITH ICCS
REPS; MEET WITH US PRESS CORPS IN INFORMAL SITUATION;
VISIT INTERROGATION CENTERS LISTED IN CONGRESSMAN RYAN'S
REPORT; RECEIVE ARVN BRIEFING ON MILITARY SITUATION;
MEET BUSINESS LEADERS AND EDUCATORS; VISIT RUSK RE-
HABILITATION CENTER. RE EMBASSY BRIEFINGS, IT WAS
GENERALLY AGREED THAT PREFERRED APPROACH WOULD BE PERHAPS
TWO-HOUR BRIEFING SESSION FIRST MORNING (MONDAY), WITH
APPROXIMATELY ONE-HOUR BRIEFINGS MORNINGS OF TUESDAY AND
WEDNESDAY AT EMBASSY, IN ORDER TO AVOID EXCESSIVELY LONG
SINGLE BRIEFING SESSION.

5. SPECIFIC REQUEST IDENTIFIED DURING FEBRUARY 18
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MEETING INCLUDED MRS. FENWICK'S DESIRE MEET ICRC REP,
VISIT QUANG NGAI, SEE PRISON SITUATION, AND RUSK CENTER.
MRS. ABZUG EXPRESSED DESIRE TO SEE BIEN HOA AIRBASE. SHE
ALSO INDICATED INTEREST IN VISITING LOC NINH. SHE ALSO
WAS ADVISED SOME DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED IN THAT REQUEST.
LARGE NUMBER OF THOSE PRESENT ANXIOUS TO MEET PRG REPS
IN SAIGON.

6. IT WAS AGREED THAT GROUP WOULD ACCEPT ONE VIETNAMESE-SPONSORED SOCIAL FUNCTION AND ONE U.S.-SPONSORED SOCIAL FUNCTION.

7. IT APPEARS UNLIKELY THAT WE SHALL BE UNABLE TO FURTHER DEFINE WHICH MEMBERS WISH TO ENGAGE IN THE VARIOUS ACTIVITIES UNTIL CODEL ARRIVES SAIGON. IT IS CLEAR

THAT A NUMBER OF THE MEMBERS ARE ANXIOUS TO MAINTAIN MAXIMUM FLEXIBILITY TO PURSUE ACTIVITIES AND APPOINTMENTS OF THEIR OWN CHOOSING. WHEN ON BOARD AIRCRAFT, WE SHALL ATTEMPT DEFINE FURTHER PREFERENCES OF INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS AND HAVE THEM AVAILABLE UPON ARRIVAL SAIGON. MAW

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